



WATER AND SEDIMENT QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE GALVESTON BAY COUNCIL



A PROGRAM OF TCEQ

Meeting Minutes Wednesday, September 14, 2022 1:30PM – 3:30PM

Subcommittee Chair: Brian Koch, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)

Subcommittee Vice Chair: Ryan Bare, Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC)

GBEP Representative: Christian N. Rines

Call to Order

Attendees: Brian Koch (TSSWCB), Ryan Bare (HARC), Christian Rines (GBEP), Kelli Ondracek (HPARD), Cassidy Kempf (HPARD), Fouad Jaber (TX A&M AgriLife), Stephanie DeVilleneuve (TWRI), Christie Taylor (TX A&M AgriLife), Zulimar Lucena (USGS), Steven Johnston (H-GAC), Celina Gauthier Lowry (Texas A&M AgriLife), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Lindsey Lippert (GBEP), Michael Lee (USGS), Natasha Zarnstorff (GBF), Rose Esteves (HPARD), Dorina Murgulet (TAMUCC), Steven Johnston (H-GAC), Gordon Pederson (GCA), David Villareal (TDA), Morgan Huetten (TIRN), Stephanie Glenn (HARC), Charlotte Cisneros (CEC), Michael LaMontagne (UHCL), Jason Pinchback (GLO).

Approval of the June 8, 2022 minutes – Ms. Rines opened the meeting with approval of the minutes. A motion was requested for approval. Mr. Johnston motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Koch seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with no changes.

A Conflict-of-Interest statement was displayed at the start of the meeting. Subcommittee members were asked to acknowledge the statement and disclose any interest with a proposed project prior to or during the project nomination discussion. All possible conflicts of interest were captured in the meeting's recording and chat feature.

New Business

FY 24 Project Proposals and Discussion

Project proposals were sent out in advance of the meeting for review. Members were asked to keep the subcommittee priorities in mind while reviewing.

The priorities selected by the WSQ Subcommittee for the FY23 finding cycle were:

- Supporting management measures and watershed-based plans
- Soil health and green infrastructure
- Targeted/Direct monitoring

Each person presenting a proposal was given a total of 5-7 minutes to explain their project followed by a few minutes for Q&A. Guidelines for presenting proposals were as follows:

- Due to time constraints, presentations were limited to a few slides;
- Proposals were presented in the order of the distributed project proposal packet;
- If a connection to a proposal was not obvious, the relationship to the project was disclosed; and,
- If a vote was necessary, only one person from each entity could vote and represent their entity.

Once all proposals had been presented to the group, the subcommittee discussed which projects should take priority. A consensus-based decision was made to recommend three projects for FY24 funding to the Budget and Priorities (B&P) Subcommittee, with two projects requesting the second half of funding in FY25 (depending on requested FY25 across all subcommittees). A third and fourth project were recommended as alternatives if any funding becomes available. Projects selected by the B&P Subcommittee would be presented to the GBC at the October council meeting for approval. The following project proposals were recommended by WSQ subcommittee members:

Project Name	Grantee	Total Request	Year 1 (FY24)	Year 2 (FY25)	Final Recommendation
Digging Deeper: Addressing soil health to improve water quality	AgriLife	\$57,894	\$57,894	\$0	\$57,894
Strategic Implementation of Green Infrastructure Best Management Practices in the Double Bayou Watershed	HARC	\$81,703	\$40,308	\$0	\$40,308 (Requesting \$41,395 in FY25 Funding)
Targeted Microplastics Monitoring in the Waters of Galveston Bay and its Tributaries	USGS	\$86,000	\$43,000	\$0	\$43,000 (Requesting \$43,000 in FY25 Funding)
Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Demonstration Site Development for Greenspace Education in the Galveston Bay Watershed	AgriLife	\$82,661	N/A	N/A	Alternate 1
Water Quality Monitoring of Riparian Restoration Initiative Sites Feasibility and Pilot Study	HPARD	\$50,000	N/A	N/A	Alternate 2
WSQ Totals		\$358,258			\$141,202

****All projects highlighted in green have been nominated to receive FY24 funding. Two projects, the “Strategic Implementation of Green Infrastructure Best Management Practices in the Double Bayou Watershed” and “Targeted Microplastics Monitoring in the Waters of Galveston Bay and its Tributaries” were recommended to receive half of the originally requested amount in FY24 and the other half in FY25. If additional funding does become available, the recommendation is to put the remainder of that money towards supporting the FY25 funds for either of these two projects or provide funding to an alternate project highlighted in red, whichever is more cost effective.***

Old Business

Project Updates from WSQ Project Mangers:

- Occurrence of Microplastics in Tributaries to Galveston Bay (USGS) – Ms. Lucena announced that they are wrapping up everything in this phase of the project and working on the final report. Once all data has been finalized it will be available for public download on the USGS website.
- Baseline Assessment of Microplastics in Galveston Bay (USGS) – Ms. Lucena announced that USGS continues to sample. There was recently a big push to complete sampling, so only a few samples remain. The team just needs a rain event to collect those final few.
- Targeted Bacteria Monitoring (BPA thru H-GAC) – Ms. Rines announced that an amendment was just approved to add \$40,000 in FY23 funds to the project. The third phase of the project will be looking to hire interns late fall and will start sampling again in the spring of 2023.
- Outreach Implementation for Galveston Bay Water Quality Projects (H-GAC) – Ms. Rines announced that the project just ended in August. Tools developed for the project are now available for download on the Coastal Communities Roadmap page on H-GAC’s website. The project also conducted a CBSM pilot project for fats, oils, and greases, that focused primarily on rental properties. They created rack cards and magnets among other tools that have been shared with multi-family developments in Bay City and Pearland.
- Supporting the Use of Green Infrastructure (GI) (H-GAC) – The QAPP has been executed. The team is currently working on gathering data and will soon convene a committee of local professionals to create a region specific list of green infrastructure practices that will be available for use. An additional \$15,000 in FY23 funds is also in the process of being added to the project.
- Townwood Park Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) (HPARD) – Ms. Ondracek announced that they have submitted bids for the bioswale contractors, and they are currently processing a purchase order for an electrical contractor to bury electrical lines in the parking lot.
- Cypress Creek/Spring Creek/Clear Creek WPPs, Cotton Bayou, and East and West Forks of the San Jacinto River (H-GAC) – Mr. Johnston announced that there will be several workgroup meetings for the Clear Creek Partnership this month on the 20th and 21st for agriculture and wildlife. Please reach out to Justin Bower on information for any upcoming stakeholder meetings. The Cypress Creek WPP has been approved by the EPA, and the Spring Creek WPP is currently in the approval process. An implementation project is also under development for Cypress Creek, Spring Creek, and the West Fork of the San Jacinto River.

- Chocolate Bay/ BIG I-Plan – TMDLS and a regional I-Plan are being developed for Chocolate Bay, which includes Chocolate Bayou, Halls and Willow bayous, and Mustang Bayou. Get into contact with Mr. Johnston for more information on future stakeholder meeting dates and times.
- Dickinson Bayou/Highland Bayou Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) (TCWP) –No Dickinson Bayou update. Ms. Gauthier Lowry announced that the team is continually working to implement the Highland Bayou WPP.

Watershed Partnership Updates/Roundtable:

- Mr. Bare announced that they just finished up Phase I of the Regional Monitoring Database and it is now available online. An announcement was recently sent out that provided additional information and a link to the portal. The data catalogue and the data download sections are complete. A feedback submission tool is also available to make sure they continue to meet the needs of the stakeholders.
- Mr. Koch announced that the TSSWCB Request for Proposals for 319 grant funding is open through the 23rd.
- Mr. Jaber announced AgriLife will be hosting a workshop titled “Sustainable Blue-Green Infrastructure and the Urban Landscape” on October 7th from 9:00am- 3:30pm at the Houston Community College Katy Campus.
- Mr. LaMontagne announced that there will be a bacterial source tracking workshop at the American Society for Microbiology meeting in June. The meeting will be in Houston this year. Please contact him for more information.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program, council, and subcommittee updates:

- Ms. Rines announced that BIL proposals are due Friday, September 16th. Please contact GBEP staff with any questions.
- Ms. Rines announced that GBEP is looking to hire a Monitoring and Research Coordinator and the position posting is open through Friday. Please share this announcement with anyone that may be interested.

Upcoming GBEP meetings:

- NRU Subcommittee Meeting – Tuesday, September 20, 2022 (9:30am 11:30am)
- Second BIL Funds Meeting – Wednesday, October 5, 2022 (9:30am -12:30pm)
- B&P Meeting – Tuesday, October 11, 2022 (9:00am -11:00am)
- GBC Meeting – Wednesday, October 19, 2022 (9:30am -12:30pm)
- Next WSQ Subcommittee Meeting – Wednesday, December 14, 2022 (1:30-3:30pm)

Adjourn